

WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RELEASE: June 25 is Lightning Safety Awareness Day in Wisconsin

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MADISON, Wis. – Wisconsin's Lightning Safety Awareness Day is Tuesday, June 25 and ReadyWisconsin is encouraging everyone to learn more about the dangers of lightning and what steps they should take to remain safe.

“When thunder roars, go indoors,” advised Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Brian Satula. “Lightning strikes can kill or seriously injure a person in the blink of an eye. When you are outdoors this summer, watch the skies and seek safe shelter if you hear thunder or see lightning.”

According to the National Lightning Safety Council, 396 people were struck and killed by lightning in the United States between 2006 and 2018. Of those fatalities, nine were in Wisconsin. Almost two-thirds of those killed nationwide were involved in outdoor leisure activities at the time they were struck.

Even if the skies are clear directly overhead, a bolt of lightning can travel several miles from the center of a storm. If you can hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.

The safest place to be is inside a sturdy shelter, such as a house. Even the inside of a car with a hard top is safer than being out in the open during a thunderstorm. If you are inside a vehicle, avoid touching metal surfaces that could conduct electricity. Never seek cover under a tree or think you are safe by being low to the ground. Get out of open areas and away from bodies of water, such as lakes or rivers.

Health officials say if a person you are with is struck by lightning, immediately dial 911 and start performing CPR. Don't be afraid to touch the victim – the human body does not hold an electrical charge.

For more information go to readywisconsin.wi.gov. For daily safety tips and information, follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/readywisconsin) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/readywisconsin).

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